Australian Bureau of Statistics

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New book sales exceed $1.2 billion

More than 1,600 employing businesses in Australia sold new books valued at $1,226 million (m) in 2001-02, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Bookshops were responsible for more than three-quarters ($976m) of the value of new book sales. The remaining book sales were divided among department stores ($184m), newsagents ($55m), supermarkets ($4m) and other retailers ($7m).

Almost 70 million new books were sold by book retailers to the public, with bookshops accounting for around 62% (43 million books) of sales. A further 29% (20 million) of books were sold by department stores and 5% (4 million) by newsagents.

The importance of new book sales to the overall operations of businesses varied for the different types of book retailers. New book sales for bookshops represented 87% of their overall income, substantially more than newsagents (5% of total income) and department stores, supermarkets and other retailers (around 1% or less of total income for each).

Bookshops reported a total income of $1,119m with $976m being from new book sales, $112m from the sale of other goods, $7m from the Educational Textbook Subsidy Scheme, $5m from the sale of services and $19m from other sources like wholesale sales and income from royalties.

Bookshops reported expenses totalling $1,099m being partly made up of $691m for the purchase of goods like books for resale and $175m for wages/salaries and other labour costs.

Bookshops recorded an operating profit before tax of $33m, representing a profit margin of 2.9%.

Further details are in **Book Retailers, Australia, 2001-02** (cat. no. 1371.0).

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